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LETTER DATED 15 MARCH 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FRANCE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 678 (1990), I have the honour to present to you a summary report on all the military operations carried out by the French armed forces with a view to the liberation of Kuwait, within the framework of the plans established jointly with the members of the coalition of countries cooperating with Kuwait.

Concerning ground forces, a division stationed in Saudi Arabia from the end of September 1990 to 23 February 1991 participated in the land offensive from 24 to 28 February, effecting a breakthrough and an encircling movement over a distance of 150 km. Two lives were lost, and 25 persons were wounded due to mine explosions.

Since 28 February, it has continued to ensure the safety of all the coalition forces facing the north-west.

Also since 28 February, a French detachment has been stationed in Kuwait City, in the compound of the French Embassy, which was able to reopen on the same day. Since that time, this detachment has responded to numerous requests from Kuwaiti and allied forces for assistance with mine-clearing operations, notably on the Kuwait City beach.

The Air Force deployed 48 combat aircraft and 22 support craft.

Until 17 January, our aircraft took part in missions for the air defence of the countries of the region.

From 17 January to 23 February, all our airborne forces were engaged in operations aimed at destroying hostile logistic installations and depots on the ground and weakening combat means to the greatest possible extent, with efforts also aimed at intelligence.

During the latter two phases, our Air Force carried out more than 2,700 sorties, including 826 ground attacks (bombing), 63 reconnaissance (intelligence) missions, 379 air defence missions and 1,460 support missions (in-flight refuelling, logistic transport, liaison).

As for naval forces, a regiment of combat helicopters embarked on an aircraft-carrier was put in place in the area on about 20 August 1990.

In addition, 12 vessels are taking part, either within a national framework or as part of EWU naval groups, in the monitoring of the Tiran, Bab al Mandab and Hormuz Straits: 7,612 vessels have been identified, 158 searched and 4 turned back.

Within the framework of the EWU naval groups, our vessels have also been engaged in escort, mine-clearing and straits surveillance operations.

French military operations ceased one hour before the announcement of the suspension of hostilities on 28 February, 0600 hours, Paris time.

I request you to have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Pierre-Louis BLANC